

# New Egypt MARKET PLACE — For — Great VALU<sup>SM</sup>

28 January 2005

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The Honorable William T. Hawks  
Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs  
US Dept. of Agriculture  
Country of Origin Labeling Program  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
Stop 0249 Room 2092-S  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250-0249

Re: Comments on Interim Final Country of Origin Labeling Regulation for Fish and Shellfish (Docket No. LS-03-04)

Dear Secretary Hawks:

New Egypt Marketplace is pleased to respond to the USDA's request for comments on the interim final regulation for country of origin labeling for fish and shellfish. We operate an independent supermarket located in central New Jersey. We respectfully request that you address two issues in the final rule.

First, we encourage you to simplify the recordkeeping provision in the final regulation. A complete record provided by the supplier, which would include the supplier's name and contact information, the type of seafood, its country of origin and method of production, and a lot code number, should be sufficient.

The supplier has firsthand knowledge of the origin and production of the seafood item. Once the seafood is harvested, its country of origin and method of production are fixed and cannot lawfully change.

Second, the interim final rule takes effect on April 4, 2005. The final rule is unlikely to be issued much before the IFR is scheduled to take effect. Therefore, we urge you to include a new effective date with the final rule so that we will be able to implement it in a timely and efficient manner. In particular, we urge you to apply USDA's recently announced uniform labeling compliance date policy.

Thank you for your attention to our comments.

Sincerely yours,



Ronald J. Nevers  
Owner/President